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## ANECDOTES OF DR. GOLDSMITH.

From the Gentleman's Magazine, for July, 1818.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH was born at Pallice, on the Southern banks of the river Inny, in the adjoining parish of Cloncalla. As he was educated at the school of the Rev. Mr. Hughes, in Ballymahon, and passed his earlier years in that town with his mother; the following brief Memoirs of him may be given, with propriety, in this Survey †.

The family of Goldsmith has been long settled in Ireland. One of them, Dr. Isaac Goldsmith, was Dean of Cork about the year 1730; but they seem to have resided chiefly in the province of Connaught—For many generations, they have regularly furnished a Minister for the Established Church, being what is termed “a Clerical family.”

On the 30th of December, 1643, the Rev. John Goldsmith, Parson of Brashoule, in the County of Mayo, was examined upon oath by Henry Jones and Henry Brereton, two of the Commissioners appointed for ascertaining the extent of the calamity of 1641.—It appears by this ex-

amination, which is preserved in Sir John Temple's Collections, that this Mr. Goldsmith was also Chaplain to Lady Mayo—a circumstance which saved him from suffering with the unfortunate persons who fell in the massacre at Shruel.

The father of the Poet was the Rev. Charles Goldsmith, who married Anne, daughter of the Rev. Oliver Jones, Diocesan Schoolmaster of Elphin, in the county of Roscommon. By the residence of Charles Goldsmith at Pallice, on the 29th of November, 1728, when his son Oliver was born there, it is probable he was Curate of the Chapel of Ease in the parish of Cloncalla or Forgeny, which is now under the care of the Rev. James Moffett, of Ballymahon. He was afterwards promoted to a benefice in the county of Roscommon, but died early; for we find his widow residing, with her son Oliver, in Ballymahon, in the year 1740—so the Poet was an orphan at the age of twelve years. The house in which they lodged is still standing; it is situated on the entrance to Ballymahon from the Edgeworthstown road, on the left-hand side, and is occupied by Mr. John Lanigan. Here Mrs. Goldsmith lived in narrow circumstances, and indifferent health, *nigra veste senescens*, till the

† This valuable article is extracted from the Statistical Survey of Shruel, in the diocese of Ardagh, and county of Longford, now in the press, with Mr. Shaw Mason's third volume of the “Parochial Account of Ireland.”



year 1772, or 1773, when she died, having been for some time before her death nearly blind. A lady who died in this neighbourhood about two years ago was well acquainted with Mrs. Goldsmith, and stated, that it was one of Oliver's habits to sit in a window of his mother's lodgings, and amuse himself by playing the flute. He was then of reserved and distant habits, fond of solitary walks, spending most of his time among the rocks and wooded islands of the river Inny, which is remarkably beautiful at Ballymahon.

The writer of this account purchased some books, a few years ago, at an auction in Ballymahon, and among them an Account-book, kept by a Mrs. Edwards, and a Miss Sarah Shore, who lived in the house next to Mrs. Goldsmith. In this village record, were several shop accounts kept with Mrs. Goldsmith, from the year 1740 to 1756. Some of the entries in the earliest of these accounts ran thus:—Tea by Master Noll—Cash by ditto—from which it appears, that the young Poet was then his mother's principal messenger on such occasions.

One of these accounts, in 1756, may be considered as a statistical curiosity, ascertaining the use and price of green tea and lump sugar, &c. in this part of the country, sixty years ago:

Mrs. Goldsmith to Sarah Shore, Dr.  
Brought forward . . . . . 15s. 6d.  
Jan. 16, half an oz. of green Tea. 3½  
A qr. of a pound of lump sugar, 3  
A pound of Jamaica sugar . . . 8  
An ounce of green Tea . . . . 7  
Half a pound of Rice . . . . . 2

Goldsmith was always plain in his appearance; but when a boy, and immediately after suffering heavily from the small pox, he was particularly ugly. When he was about seven years old, a Fiddler,

who reckoned himself a wit, happened to be playing to some company in Mrs. Goldsmith's house. During a pause between two sets of Country dances, little Oliver surprised the party, by jumping up suddenly, and dancing round the room. Struck with the grotesque appearance of the ill-favoured child, the fiddler exclaimed "*Æsop*," and the company burst into laughter; when Oliver turned to them, with a smile, and repeated the following couplet:

"Heralds, proclaim aloud, all saying,  
See *Æsop* dancing, and his *Monkey* playing."

This anecdote is given on the authority of a direct descendant of the Rev. Henry Goldsmith, of Lissoy, Curate of Kilkenny, West, and the elder brother of our Poet.

On the 11th of June, 1744, the following entry was made on the books of Trinity College, Dublin:—"Olivarius Goldsmith, Siz filius Caroli Clerici, ann. agen. 15, natus in Comitatu Westmeath, educatus sub ferulâ M. Hughes admissus est, Tutor. M. Wilder." The error with respect to the county in which he was born arose from the vicinity of Pallice to the borders of Westmeath—or, as stated by one of his biographers, from the circumstance of his having at that time lived in that county. But it is probable that he did not enter College till some time after his father's death; for, from what has been already mentioned of him and his mother, they were resident in Ballymahon when he was but twelve years old; and it is certain that it was not till after his father's death they removed to that town from the county of Roscommon, in which he died a beneficed clergyman. The Tutor mentioned in this record was the Rev. Theaker Wilder a younger son of the family of Castlewilder, in the county of Longford. He was remarkable for the eccentricity of his character,



from the severity of which our Poet suffered heavily while under his tuition. Although Goldsmith did not distinguish himself in the University, there can be no doubt of his having been duly prepared for entering it. Few boys of fifteen have ever been able to obtain a Sizer's place, which is a situation of emolument, contended for by many persons, and disposed of to the best answerer, as the Scholarships are. In Goldsmith's days, the Siziers of the University of Dublin are said to have been compelled to submit to many menial services, such as sweeping the Courts, and carrying up dinner from the kitchen to the Common-Hall: but these degrading offices have for many years back been committed to persons more fitted to execute them, than young men often tenderly brought up, liberally educated, and whose only disqualification is the want of money to pay entrance fees, and the annual charge of a Tutor.

June 15, 1747, Goldsmith obtained his only laurel in the University of Dublin---an exhibition on the foundation of Erasmus Smyth, Esq. These exhibitions consist of a small sum of money to unsuccessful candidates for Scholarships. In the same year, he was publickly admonished, for having been concerned in a riot, and in pumping a bailiff, who had invaded the privileged precincts of the College.

February 27, 1749, he was admitted Bachelor of Arts, two years after the regular time. In the Roll of those qualified for admission to the College Library, it appears that Oliver Goldsmith took the oaths necessary to those who desire that privilege. The time for this is immediately after obtaining the degree of Bachelor of Arts.

In the month of December, 1753, we find him in Edinburgh, a Medical Student, from which place he wrote a letter to his friend Robert

Bryanton, of Ballymahon, Esq. published in a late edition of his Works.—The original of this letter was preserved by the late Mrs. M'Dermott of that town. The edition in which this letter has been published is that of Otridge and Son, London, 1812.

1756—About the breaking out of the war in this year, Goldsmith returned from the continent to England in great distress, having gone to travel, from Edinburgh, in 1754.

1757, December 27, he wrote a letter to Daniel Hudson, Esq. of Lissoy, near Ballymahon, who had married his niece. In this letter, he says, he could wish from his heart, that Mr. and Mrs. Hudson and Lissoy, and Ballymahon, and all his friends there, would fairly make a migration to Middlesex"—adding, that, as on second thoughts might be attended with inconvenience, "*Mahomet should go to the mountain,*" and he promised to spend six weeks with them in the ensuing summer. This however did not occur.

"Tho' like the hare whom hounds and horns pursue,  
He sought the place where first his breath he drew;  
The darling Bard of Erin wish'd in vain  
To view his lovely natal spot again,  
To find his wand'ring o'er, his sorrows past,  
Return in peace, and die at home at last!"

In Otridge's edition of this author's works, Lissoy is erroneously spelled *Lishoy*. It is very generally believed in this neighbourhood, that it was from Lissoy that Goldsmith drew more than the outlines of his enchanting scenery of "The Deserted Village." His brother was the village preacher there, when he dedicated "The Traveller" to him. The Clergyman's mansion is still well known—the parish church of Kilkenny, West, tops the neighbouring hill—and near it may be seen the Mill and the Lake. The Hawthorn tree still exists---though mutilated,



"*laniatum corpore toto*," by the curious travellers, who cut pieces from it, as from the Royal Oak, or from the Mulberry tree of Stratford-upon-Avon. The village alehouse has been lately rebuilt, and ornamented by the sign of "*The Three Jolly Pigeons*."

A lady from the neighbourhood of Portglenone, in the county of Antrim, was one of those who visited the Deserted Village in the summer of 1817; and was fortunate enough to find, in a cottage adjoining the alehouse, an old smoaked print, which, she was credibly informed, was the identical "*Twelve good Rules*" which had ornamented that rural tavern, with the "*Royal Game of Goose*," &c. &c. when Goldsmith drew his fascinating description of it. And here it may be observed, that the scenery of the Alehouse was that of the habitations of most of the farmers in this neighbourhood, before the introduction of modern expensive furniture into them. Every parlour floor was flagged, or sanded—had its "bed by night, a chest of drawers by day;" and exhibited, either on a chimney board, or in an open corner cupboard, a parcel of broken or unbroken pieces of china, glass, or stained earthenware; while the walls were covered with gun-racks, fishing-tackle, and homely prints—among which the *Twelve good Rules*, and *Royal Game of Goose*, seldom failed to find a place. Thus was Jemmy Anthony's parlour once ornamented, in the old mill of Ballymahon, which he and his ancestors occupied for a century; but in his early day it boasted the addition of Violins, Hautboys, Flutes, and a French horn, with which he and his ingenious brothers often made sonorous melody on the lovely banks of the Inny, and delighted the villagers, who, after the toil of the day, assembled on the bridge to hear them. But, oh! the ravages of

time! The musick floats down the stream no more—all is silent, except the roar of the waters through the broken eel-weirs—the mill has fallen across the watercourse—and the musicians, "their fates as various as the roads they took," are all gone down to the grave, with the solitary exception of poor Jemmy, who, surviving the desolation that surrounds him, sticks like a wall-flower in an adjacent tenement,

"And in his purse since few bright coins appear,  
He mounts the rostrum as an auctioneer."

1759. August 9th, Goldsmith wrote to Edward Mills, Esq. near Roscommon, requesting him to interest himself in a subscription to his "*Essay on the present state of Taste and Literature in Europe*." His feelings were deeply wounded by being on this occasion treated with neglect, not only by Mr. Mills, but by another friend, a Mr. Lawder, to whom he had written on this same subject.

1761—In this year he published his "*Vicar of Wakefield*," in which it is said here that he drew the characters of his brother and his sister-in-law, the inhabitants of the "modest mansion" of Lissoy. On the 31st of May, in this year, he received his first visit from Dr. Johnson.

1762—In this year he published his "*Citizen of the World*," in two volumes, 12mo.

1763—In the spring of this year he had lodgings at Canonbury House, near Islington, where he wrote his "*Letters on English History*," erroneously ascribed to Lord Lyttelton.

1765—In this year "*The Traveller*" appeared, and the author was introduced to the Earl of Northumberland, at that time Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and he recommended his brother Henry for preferment. In this year his "*Essays*" were published, and he petitioned Lord Bute in vain to



be allowed a salary to enable him to penetrate into the interior of Asia. His memorial was unnoticed and neglected. Goldsmith on this occasion wanted a friend such as Lord Halifax proved to Addison upon the arrival of the news of the victory of Blenheim. On that occasion, the Lord Treasurer Godolphin, in the fulness of his joy, meeting with the above-mentioned Nobleman, told him, "It was a pity the memory of such a victory should ever be forgot;" he added, that "he was pretty sure his Lordship, who was so distinguished a patron of men of letters, must know some person whose pen was capable of doing justice to the action." Lord Halifax replied that he did indeed know such a person, but would not desire him to write upon the subject his Lordship had mentioned. The Lord Treasurer entreated to know the reason of so unkind a resolution; Lord Halifax briskly told him, that *he had long, with indignation, observed that while many fools and blockheads were maintained in their pride and luxury at the expense of the publick, such men as were really an honour to their country, and to the age they lived in, were shamefully suffered to languish in obscurity; that for his own part, he would never desire any gentleman of parts and learning, to employ his time in celebrating a Ministry, who had neither the justice nor generosity to make it worth his while.*

The Lord Treasurer calmly replied, that he would seriously consider of what his Lordship had said, and endeavour to give no fresh occasion for such reproaches; but that, in the present case, he took it upon himself to promise, that any gentleman whom his lordship should name to him, as capable of celebrating the late action, should find it worth his while to exert his genius on that subject. With this encouragement, Lord Halifax named

Mr. Addison. The celebrated Poem, entitled "The Campaign," was soon afterwards published, and the author found the Lord Treasurer as good as his word.

1768, January 29, Goldsmith published *The Good-natured Man*, his first Comedy. In the year 1769, the *The Deserted Village* appeared, upon whose inimitable beauties it is unnecessary to descant here. On the 13th of January, in this year, our author engaged with Mr. Thomas Davies, to write an History of England in four volumes, octavo, which engagement was afterwards fulfilled.

1772, April 10, Mr. Thomas Woolsey, of Dundalk, wrote to Goldsmith, to rectify an error in his History of England, respecting Dr. Walker, the celebrated Governor of Londonderry, whom he had denominated in that work a Dissenting Minister, though he was Rector of Donoughmore, in the county of Tyrone.

In 1771, Goldsmith wrote the Life of Lord Bolingbroke, which he prefixed to a Dissertation on Parties. It was republished in 1775, under the name of the author.

1770—In the month of January this year, he wrote to his youngest brother, Mr. Maurice Goldsmith. In this letter he complains that he had written above an hundred letters to his friends in Ireland, to which he received no answer. He inquired in it for his mother, his brother Hodson, his sister Johnson, and the family of Ballyoughter.

1775, March 13, *The Mistakes of a Night* appeared first in Covent Garden theatre. The plot of this Comedy was suggested to Goldsmith, by an adventure which occurred to himself at Ardagh, in the county of Longford, where he mistook the house of Mr. Fetherston (grandfather of the present Sir Thomas Fetherston) for an inn, having been directed to it by an



humorous fencing-master, named Cornelius Kelly, once the instructor of the celebrated Marquis of Granby.

In the beginning of the year 1774, he received a legacy of fifteen pounds from the executors of his uncle, the Rev. Thomas Contarine,

sometime Rector of Kilmore, near Carrick on Shannon. About the same time, his "History of the Earth and Animated Nature" was published: and he died the fourth of April.

*Lifford, June 10th, 1818.*

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LETTER OF ADVICE, FROM MR. GODWIN, TO A YOUNG AMERICAN, OF THE COURSE OF STUDIES IT MIGHT BE MOST ADVANTAGEOUS FOR HIM TO PURSUE.

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From the Edinburgh Magazine, for March, 1818.

MY DEAR SIR,

I HAVE thought, at least twenty times since you left London, of the promise I made you, and was at first inclined to consider it, as you appear to have done, as wholly unconditional, and to be performed out of hand. And I should, perhaps, have proceeded in that way; but that my situation often draws me, with an imperious summons, in a thousand different directions; and thus the first heat of my engagement subsided. I then altered my mind, and made a resolution, that you should never have the thing you asked for, unless you wrote to remind me of my promise. I thought within myself, that, if the advice was not worth that, it was not worth my trouble in digesting. From the first moment I saw you in this house, I conceived a partiality for you, founded on physiognomy in an extensive sense, as comprehending countenance, voice, figure, gesture, and demeanour; but if you forgot me, as soon as I was out of your sight, I determined that this partiality should not prove a source of trouble to me.

And, now that you have discharged your part of the condition I secretly prescribed, I am very apprehensive that you have formed an exaggerated idea of what I can do for you in this respect. I am a man of very limited observation

and inquiry, and know little but of such things as lie within those limits. If I wished to form a universal library, I should feel myself in conscience obliged to resort to those persons who knew more in one and another class of literature than I did, and to lay their knowledge in whatever they understood best under contribution. But this I do not mean to undertake for you; I will reason but of what I know; and shall leave you to learn of the professors themselves, as to the things to which I have never dedicated myself.

You will find many of my ideas of the studies to be pursued, and the books to be read, by young persons, in the *Enquirer*, and more to the same purpose in the preface to a small book for children, entitled, "Scripture Histories, given in the words of the original," in two volumes 18mo.

It is my opinion, that the imagination is to be cultivated in education, more than the dry accumulation of science and natural facts. The noblest part of man is his moral nature; and I hold morality principally to depend, agreeably to the admirable maxim of Jesus, upon our putting ourselves in the place of another, feeling his feelings, and apprehending his desires; in a word, doing to others, as we would wish, were we they, to be done unto,



Another thing that may be a great and most essential aid to our cultivating moral sentiments, will consist in our studying the best models, and figuring to ourselves the most excellent things of which human nature is capable. For this purpose, there is nothing so valuable as the histories of Greece and Rome. There are certain cold-blooded reasoners who say, that the ancients were in nothing better than ourselves,—that their stature of mind was no taller, and their feelings in nothing more elevated,—and that human nature, in all ages and countries, is the same. I do not myself believe this. But, if it is so, certainly ancient history is the bravest and sublimest fiction that it ever entered into the mind of man to create. No poets, or romance writers, or story tellers, have ever been able to feign such models of an erect, and generous, and publick-spirited, and self-postponing mind, as are to be found in Livy and Dionysius of Halicarnassus. If the story be a falsehood, the emotions, and, in many readers, the never-to-be-destroyed impressions it produces, are real; and I am firmly of opinion, that the man that has not been imbued with these tales in his earliest youth, can never be so noble a creature, as the man with whom they have made a part of his education stands a chance to be.

To study the Greek and Roman history, it were undoubtedly best to read it in their own historians. To do this, we must have a competent mastery of the Greek and Latin languages. But it would be a dangerous delusion to put off the study long, under the idea that a few years hence we will read these things in the originals. You will find the story told, with a decent portion of congenial feeling, in Rollin's Ancient History, and Vertot's Revolutions of Rome. You

should also read Plutarch's Lives, and a translation into English or French of Dionysius's Antiquities. Mitford for the History of Greece, and Hooke for that of Rome, are writers of some degree of critical judgment; but Hooke has a baleful scepticism about, and a pernicious lust to dispute, the virtues of illustrious men, and Mitford is almost frantick with the love of despotism and oppression. Middleton's Life of Cicero, and Blackwell's Court of Augustus, are books written in the right spirit. And, if you do not soon read Thucydides in the original, you will soon feel yourself disposed to read Sallust, and Livy, and perhaps Tacitus, in the genuine language in which these glorious men have clothed their thoughts.

The aim of my meditation at this moment, is to devise that course of study that shall make him who pursues it independent and generous. For a similar reason, therefore, to that which has induced me to recommend the histories of Greece and Rome, I would next call the attention of my pupil to the age of chivalry. This, also, is a generous age, though of a very different cast from that of the best period of ancient history. Each has its beauty. Considered in relation to man as a species of being divided into two sexes, the age of chivalry has greatly the advantage over the purest ages of antiquity. How far their several excellencies may be united and blended together in future time, may be a matter for after consideration. You may begin your acquaintance with the age of chivalry with St. Palaye's *Memoires sur l'Ancienne Chevalerie*, and Southey's Chronicle of the Cid. Cervante's admirable romance of Don Quixote, if read with a deep feeling of its contents, and that high veneration for, and strong sympathy with, its hero, which it is calculat-



ed to excite in every ingenuous mind, is one of the noblest records of the principles of chivalry. I am not anxious to recommend a complete cycle of the best writers on any subject. You cannot do better perhaps in that respect, than I have done before you. I always found one writer in his occasional remembrances and references leading to another, till I might, if I had chosen it, have collected a complete library of the best books on any given topick, without almost being obliged to recur to any one living counsellor for his advice.

We can never get at the sort of man that I am contemplating, and that I would, if I could, create, without making him also a reader and lover of poetry. I require from him the glow of intellect and sentiment, as well as the glow of a social being,—I would have him have his occasional moods of sublimity, and, if I may so call it, literary tenderness, as well as a constant determination of mind to habits of philanthropy. You will find some good ideas on the value of poetry in Sir Philip Sidney's *Defence of Poesy*, and the last part of Sir William Temple's *Miscellanies*.

The subject of poetry is intimately connected with the last subject I mentioned, the age of chivalry. It is in the institutions of chivalry that the great distinctive characteristics of modern from ancient poetry originate. The soul of modern poetry, separately considered, lies in the importance which the spirit of chivalry has given to the female sex. The ancients pitted a man against a man, and thought much of his thews and sinews, and the graces and energy which nature has given to his corporeal frame. This was the state of things in the time of Homer. In a more refined age, they added all those excellencies which grow out of the most fervid

and entire love of country. Antiquity taught her natives to love women, and that not in the purest sense; the age of chivalry taught her subjects to adore them. I think, quite contrary to the vulgar maxim on the subject, that love is never love in its best spirit, but among unequals. The love of parent to child is its best model, and its most permanent effect. It is, therefore, an excellent invention of modern times, that, while woman, by the nature of things, must look up to man, teaches us, in our turn, to regard woman not merely as a convenience to be made use of, but as a being to be treated with courtship, and consideration, and deference.

Agreeably to the difference between what we call the heroick times, and the times of chivalry, are the characteristick-features of ancient and modern poetry. The ancient is simple, and manly, and distinct, full of severe graces, and heroick enthusiasm. The modern excels more in tenderness, and the indulgence of a tone of magnificent obscurity. The ancients, upon the whole, had more energy; we have more of the wantoning of the imagination, and the conjuring up a fairy vision

Of some gay creatures of the element  
That in the colours of the rainbow live,  
And play in the plighted clouds.

It is not necessary to decide whether the ancient or the modern poetry is best; both are above all price; but it is certain, that the excellencies that are all our own, have a magnificence, and a beauty, and a thrilling character, that nothing can surpass. The best English poets are Shakespeare, and Milton, and Chaucer, and Spenser. Ariosto is, above all others, the poet of chivalry. The Greek and Latin poets it is hardly necessary to enumerate. There is one book of criti-



cism, and perhaps only one, that I would recommend to you, Schlegel's *Lectures on Dramatick Literature*. The book is deformed, indeed, with a pretty copious sprinkling of German mysticism, but it is fraught with a great multitude of admirable observations.

The mention of criticism leads me to a thought, which I will immediately put down. I would advise a young person to be very moderate in his attention to new books. In all the world, I think, there is scarcely any thing more despicable, than the man that confines his reading to the publications of the day; he is next in rank to the boarding-school Miss, who devours every novel that is spawned forth from the press of the season. If you look into reviews, let it be principally to wonder at the stolidity of your contemporaries, who regard them as the oracles of learning.

One other course of reading I would earnestly recommend to you; and many persons would vehemently exclaim against me for doing so, —metaphysics. It excels, perhaps, all other studies in the world, in the character of a practical logick, a disciplining and subtilising of the rational faculties. Metaphysics, we are told, is a mere jargon, where men dispute for ever, without gaining a single step; it is nothing but specious obscurity and ignorance. This is not my opinion. In the first place, metaphysics is the theoretical science of the human mind; and it would be strange if mind was the only science not worth studying, or the only science in which real knowledge could not be acquired. Secondly, it is the theoretical science of the universe, and of causation, and must settle, if ever they can be settled, the first principles of natural religion. As to its uncertainty, I cannot conceive that any one with

an unprejudiced mind, can read what has been best written on free-will and necessity, on self-love and benevolence, and other grand questions, and then say that nothing has been attained, and that all this is impertinent and senseless waste of words. I would particularly recommend Bishop Berkeley, especially his *Principles of Human Knowledge*, and Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature*, and Hartley's *Observations on Man*. Your own Jonathan Edwards has written excellently on Free-will; and Hutcheson and Hazlitt on Self-love and Benevolence. The title of Hutcheson's book is, *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections*, and of Hazlitt's, *An Enquiry into the Principles of Human Action*. No young man can read Andrew Baxter's *Enquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul*, without being the better for it.

It is time that I should now come to the consideration of language. Language is as necessary an instrument for conducting the operations of the mind, as the hands are for conducting the operations of the body; and the most obvious way of acquiring the power of weighing and judging words aright, is by enabling ourselves to compare the words and forms of different languages. I, therefore, highly approve of classical education. It has often been said by the wise men of the world, What a miserable waste of time it is, that boys should be occupied for successive year after year in acquiring the Greek and Latin tongues! How much more usefully would these years be employed in learning the knowledge of things, and making a substantial acquaintance with the studies of men! I totally dissent from this. As to the knowledge of things, young men will soon enough be plunged in the mire of cold and sordid realities, such things as it



is the calamity of man that he should be condemned to consume so much of his mature life upon; and I should wish that those who can afford the leisure of education, should begin with acquiring something a little generous and elevated. As to the studies of men, if boys begin with them before they are capable of weighing them, they will acquire nothing but prejudices, which it will be their greatest interest and highest happiness, with infinite labour, to unlearn. Words are happily a knowledge, to the acquisition of which the faculties of boys are perfectly competent, and which can do them nothing but good. Nature has decreed that human beings should be so long in a state of non-age, that it demands some ingenuity to discover how the years of boys of a certain condition in life may be employed innocently in acquiring good habits, and none of that appearance of reason and wisdom which, in boys, surpasses in nothing the instructions we bestow on monkeys and parrots. One of the best maxims of the eloquent Rousseau is where he says, 'The master-piece of a good education is to know how to lose time profitably.'

Every man has a language that is peculiarly his own; and it should be a great object with him to learn whatever may give illustration to the genius of that. Our language is the English. For this purpose, then, I would recommend to every young man who has leisure, to acquire some knowledge of the Saxon, and one or two other northern languages. Horne Tooke, in his *Diversions of Purley*, is the only man that has done much towards analysing the elements of the English tongue. But another, and perhaps still more important way, to acquire a knowledge and true relish of the genius of the English tongue, is, by studying its successive authors from age to age. It is an eminent

happiness we possess, that our authors from generation to generation are so much worth studying. The first resplendent genius in our literary annals is Chaucer. From this age to that of Elizabeth we have not much; but it will be good not entirely to drop any of the links of the chain. The period of Elizabeth is perfectly admirable. Roger Ascham, and Golding's translation of Mornay's *Trewnesse of Christian Religion*, are among the best canonical books of genuine English. Next come the translators of that age, who are worthy to be studied day and night by those who would perfectly feel the genius of our language. Among these, Phaer's *Virgil*, Chapman's *Homer*, and Sir Thomas North's *Plutarch*, are, perhaps, the best, and are, in my opinion, incomparably superior to the later translations of those authors. Of course, I hardly need say, that Lord Bacon is one of the first writers that has appeared in the catalogue of human creatures, and one of those who is most worthy to be studied. I might have brought him in among the metaphysicians, but I preferred putting him here. Nothing can be more magnificent and impressive than his language: it is rather that of a god than a man. I would also specially recommend Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, and the writings of Sir Thomas Browne. No man, I suppose, is to be told, that the dramatick writers of the age of Elizabeth are among the most astonishing specimens of human intellect. Shakespeare is the greatest, and stands at an immense distance from all the rest; but, though he outshines them, he does not put out their light. Ben Jonson is himself a host; of Beaumont and Fletcher I cannot think without enthusiasm; and Ford and Massinger well deserve to be studied. Even French literature was worthy of some notice in these



times; and Montaigne is entitled to rank with some of the best English prose-writers, his contemporaries.

In looking over what I have written, I think I have not said enough on the subject of modern history. Your language is English, the frame of your laws and your law-courts is essentially English; therefore, and because the English moral and intellectual character ranks the first of modern times, I think English history is entitled to your preference. Whoever reads English history must take Hume for his text. The subtlety of his mind, the depth of his conceptions, and the surpassing graces of his composition, must always place him in the first class of writers. His work is tarnished with a worthless partiality to the race of kings that Scotland sent to reign over us; and is wofully destitute of that energetick moral and publick feeling that distinguishes the Latin historians. Yet we have nothing else on the subject that deserves the name of composition. I have already spoken of the emphatick attention that is due to the age of chivalry. The feudal system is one of the most extraordinary productions of the human mind. It is a great mistake to say, that these were dark ages. It was about this period that logick was invented; for I will venture to assert, that the ancients knew nothing about close reasoning and an unbroken chain of argumentative deduction, in comparison with the moderns. For all the excellence we possess in this art we are indebted to the schoolmen, the monks and friars in the solitude of their cloisters. It is true that they were too proud of their new acquisitions, and subtilized and refined, till occasionally they became truly ridiculous. This does not extinguish their claim to our applause, though it has dreadfully tarnished the lustre of their

memory in the vulgar eye. Hume passes over the feudal system and the age of chivalry as if it were a dishonour to his pen to be employed on these subjects, while he enlarges with endless copiousness on the proofs of the sincerity of Charles the First, and the execrable publick and private profligacies of Charles the Second.

Next to the age of feudality and chivalry, the period of English history most worthy of our attention, lies between the accession of Elizabeth and the Restoration. But let no man think that he learns any thing, particularly of modern history, by reading a single book. It fortunately happens, as far as the civil wars are concerned, that we have two excellent writers of the two opposite parties, Clarendon and Ludlow, beside many others worthy to be consulted. You should also have recourse to as many lives of eminent persons connected with the period then under your consideration, as you can conveniently procure. Letters of State, memorials, and publick papers, are, in this respect, of inestimable value. They are to a considerable degree, the principal actors in the scene, writing their own history. He that would really understand history, should proceed in some degree as if he were writing history. He should be surrounded with chronological tables and maps. He should compare one authority with another, and not put himself under the guidance of any. This is the difference I make between reading and study. He that confines himself to one book at a time, may be amused, but is no student. In order to study, I must sit in some measure in the middle of a library. Nor can any one truly study, without the perpetual use of a pen, to make notes, and abstracts, and arrangements of dates. The shorter the notes, and the more they can be



looked through at a glance, the better. The only limit in this respect is, that they should be so constructed, that if I do not look at them again till after an interval of seven years, I should understand them. Learn to read slow,—if you keep to your point, and do not suffer your thoughts, according to an old phrase, to go a woolgathering, you will be in little danger of excess in this direction.

Accept in good part, my young friend, this attempt to answer your expectation, and be assured, that if I could have done better, it should not have been less at your service. Your dispositions appear to me to be excellent; and, as you

will probably be enabled to make some figure, and, what is much better to act the part of the real patriot and the friend of man, in your own country, you should resolve to bestow on your mind an assiduous cultivation. It is the truly enlightened man that is best qualified to be truly useful; and, as Lord Bacon says, "It is almost without instance contradictory, that ever any government was disastrous, that was in the hands of learned governors. The wit of one man can no more countervail learning, than one man's means can hold way with a common purse." My best wishes attend you.

February 12, 1818.

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## FRAGMENTA,

BEING THOUGHTS, OBSERVATIONS, REFLECTIONS, AND CRITICISMS, WITH ANECDOTES AND CHARACTERS ANCIENT AND MODERN.

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From the European Magazine, for Jan. 1818.

### VIRTUE AND VICE.

**C**ASUISTRY is not a favourite science in the present age, else the following questions respecting the exact limits of virtue and vice might be submitted to a modern Suarez, or a Bellarmine, without impropriety.

In what consists precisely the virtue of humanity? There are many persons existing, who, setting aside every precept of religion, would actually and literally suffer more pain by refusing to relieve a wretch in actual distress, than by depriving themselves of the sum of money necessary for that relief. Do these persons acquire any additional merit in the sight of Heaven, by luxuriously indulging their own inclinations?

Where shall we fix the exact point of vice in the article of intemperance? Shall the puling sinner, who grows confused and ridiculous after three glasses of port, be liable to a more severe censure hereafter,

than that jolly fellow who swallows bottle after bottle and bowl after bowl; who sees his convivial friends totter and sink from their chairs; who, in fine, after drinking a triumphant farewell bumper over the fallen around him, can walk coolly home, and cast up the week's account of his house-keeping without an error before he goes to bed? Such variation may be found between one drinker and another. But who shall settle whether the sin be actually constituted by deprivation of reason, or by indulgence of appetite?

The casuists might also amuse themselves with settling, whether the following action should be ranged under the banners of justice or inhumanity. We once had a friend who studied at a celebrated university; and having a strong predilection for anatomy, took great pleasure in attending on dissections. One evening, he, with many others, were anxiously attending the commencement of that operation on



the body of a notorious malefactor, which lay stretched out on the table before them ; the surgeon, who had been placing it in a proper position, turning to the company, addressed them thus :—" I am pretty certain, gentlemen, from the warmth of the subject, and the flexibility of the limbs, that, by a proper degree of attention and care, the vital heat would return, and life in consequence take place. But then, when it is considered what a rascal we should again have amongst us ; that he was executed for having murdered a girl who was with child by him ; and that, were he to be restored to life, he would probably murder somebody else : when all these things are coolly considered, I own it is *my* opinion, that we had better proceed with the dissection." With these words he plunged the knife into the breast of the carcase, and precluded at once all dread of future assassinations or hopes of future repentance.

WAGERS.

Our novel and essay writers are, in general, very severe on the custom of deciding disputes in conversation by a bet. Undoubtedly this practice, when it tends to supercede argument, is very absurd ; but a person who will assert a fact, yet when that fact is controverted refuse to stake some trifling sum on the truth of it, seems to expect the company should put a greater confidence in his judgment or memory than he does himself. There is a story told of a man who, on persisting in asserting the veracity of some improbable adventure he was relating, was asked by one of the company if he would bet any thing on the truth of it : " No," he replied, " I will not bet upon it, but I'll swear to it."\*

\* More *consistent*, as it proceeded from conviction, but not much more *rational*, was the answer of the good old Bishop Latimer, who had, at a controversial conference, been out-talked by younger

WEALTH.

All people want to be extremely rich, and few, very few in proportion, can have that wish gratified : now, as authors are, by prescription, excluded from receiving any considerable benefits from Plutus, it seems to be a duty incumbent on that literary branch of the disappointed to present as many motives for consolation as possible to their anxious brethren.

Extreme wealth is generally accompanied either by a profusion, which soon annihilates the treasure it preys upon, or a suspicion, which renders all its enjoyments tasteless.

Wit very seldom honours the *exceeding* rich man with a visit. The first Lord Halifax, although, by poetick license, characterised as being

" Himself as rich as fifty Jews,"

was no Cræsus : or were he so, he was the only one. None but himself, of all the followers of Apollo, seem to have risen above mediocrity in point of fortune, and very few have even attained to that humble state.

In our own time, a little observation will convince us, that few bright productions have flowed from the pens of *enormously* wealthy writers. Some degree of indigence, indeed, seems necessary as a spur to genius.

We are told that Petrarch would not espouse his Laura, when a widow, lest possession of the object of his verse might damp his poetick fire. Most assuredly this consideration ought to prevent some of the brightest of our modern writers from wishing for 20,000*l.* prizes in the lottery.

Poverty is longer lived than wealth. For one suicide, who

divines, and out-argued by those who were more studied in the fathers, " I cannot talk for my religion, but I am ready to die for it."



from "embarrassed circumstances," plunges into the Thames, how many hundreds perish by the pleasant and tardy, but sure and certain, poison of exquisite cookery.

It was the observation of a physician, who was remarkable for his practice in cases of insanity, that the South-Sea year had supplied him with an amazing increase of patients, but that among them all there was *not one* whose delirium was brought on by the loss of his money; they were all to be numbered among the fortunate stock-sellers.

The purses of the apparently wealthy are frequently as ill-provided as those among the lowest of their inferiours. In short, as the following tale will prove, a man may be actually too great to have a penny in his pocket. About sixty years ago, some alterations were making in a part of Kensington Gardens, and the good old George the Second used to take pleasure, at times, in overlooking the workmen. Among these, there chanced to be an half-

witted fellow, who never could be brought to comprehend why he might not be as free with the King, as with any other person for whom he had been used to work. One day, finding what he thought a proper opportunity, he grinned in the face of his Sovereign, and with great earnestness demanded "something to drink." Displeased at the boldness of the request, yet ashamed to deny it, the King mechanically employed both his hands in search of coin, and finding none, replied with dignity, and his usual German accent, "I have no money in my pockets."—"Nor I neither," returned the idiot, "I can't think where it is all gone, for my part!"—The Sovereign frowned at the repartee, which, like many another joke, was prejudicial to its maker, and the fool was employed no longer near the palace. Had he lived a couple of centuries earlier, his buffoonery might have gained him a place about court.

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## POETRY.

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From the Edinburgh Magazine, for June 1818.

THE ADVENTURES OF PARSON SCHMOLKE AND THE SCHOOLMASTER BAKEL.

(Translated from the German of Langbein.)

MR. EDITOR,

THE poem, of which the following is a translation, appears in a "Deutsche Blumenlese," or, "Collection of the Flowers of German Literature," and is ascribed to "Langbein." The original is happily conceived, and exquisitely expressed. In vain would I attempt to imitate the rich humour, serious drollery, and close condensation of Langbein's style, in a translation. The interest of the story, however, does not consist entirely in the ex-

pression, for the incidents can scarcely fail to amuse, even under the disadvantages of an imperfect translation. If your are of the same opinion, the piece may perhaps find a place in your interesting Miscellany. The original has been strictly adhered to, except in the postponement of the *denouement* for a few stanzas, to continue longer the interest of the story.—  
I am, &c. A. B.

"WHERE are we now? See nought appears  
But cattle on the hill;  
I told you oft to shun the left,  
But you would have your will.  
You've brought us here;—now save us both  
From rock, and pit, and rill."



"*Hic hæret aqua,*' honoured Sir,  
Trust now no more to me;  
But mark! I tremble not although  
We thieves and wolves may see.  
Says Horace,—'*Purus sceleris*  
*Non eget mauri jaculis.*'"

"O that you and your Latin were  
In Styx, and I—in bed.  
Is this a time to laugh and jest  
With my distress and dread?  
But see! low in the valley gleams  
A light; O let us seek its beams!"

"*Cur non, mi Domine,*' for there  
A mortal must abide;  
In such a place the cloven feet  
And tail would ne'er reside.  
On, quickly on! for now I think  
How sweet their potent ale will  
drink."

Then, reeling for the light, they steer,  
These heroes of my strain;  
But whence they came, I, with your  
leave,  
In one word may explain—  
They staggered from a bridal feast  
With all they could contain.

The hut is reached; a man appears  
All clad in in sullied brown,  
Who eyes our two benighted friends  
With dark suspicious frown.  
They begged for beds, till rising day  
Should dawn to light them on their  
way.

"Indeed, to tell your Honours true,  
Of beds I've none to spare,  
But solace such as straw may yield  
You're welcome here to share.  
If that can please you, soon you'll find  
A truss and chamber to your mind."

Most piteously upon his paunch  
The Parson cast his eye;  
"How now, thou fat rotundity,  
On straw couch wilt thou lie?"—  
"*Sub sole nil perfectum est.*"  
Said Bakel—"here I'll take my rest."

He said, and soon was fast asleep,  
The Parson looked around  
For peg to hang his wig upon,  
But no one could be found:  
Himself upon the straw he cast,  
His wig upon the ground.

Between the guests and host alone  
A thin partition stood:  
They heard him sing an evening hymn,  
Then pray for faith and food;

And now, the godly service done,  
Unto his spouse he thus began

"My dear, as soon as morning dawns,  
The *black ones* I shall slay,  
They will be, when I think again,  
Much fatter than I say  
Oh how that bullet-round one will—  
He makes my very chops distill!"

"Ah, Bakel! do you sleep? or hear  
These cannibals declare,  
That, when the morning sun ascends,  
On us they mean to fare?  
Oh from this horrid murderous den  
Were I but out alive again!"

"*Proh dolor,*' Sir; but still there's hope,  
We're not in Charon's barge;  
Still may some good *Convivia*,  
Your little paunch enlarge.  
Nay ope your eyes,—look here and see  
A window; from it leap with me."

"Yes! such a goose-quill thing as you  
May leap, and dread no harm;  
But, were I such a leap to take,  
I'd die with pure alarm;  
This ponderous body would but drop  
Into Death's open arm."

Now Bakel used his eloquence  
To urge his friend to fly;  
He painted dangers great and dread  
If they should longer lie;  
Till he took courage, from despair,  
The unknown dreadful leap to dare.

But still there was a point to fix,  
Which first the leap should try;  
Each urged the other, and again  
Replied "Oh no, not I."  
At last our friend the pedagogue  
Down like a bird did fly.

He lighted *salva venia*,  
Upon a hill of dung,  
And bounding from the dirt unhurt  
Like dunghill cock he sprung:  
But like a cliff from mountain cast,  
Fell the fat parson—and stuck fast!

He sunk up to the waist,—nor could  
Move on a single hair;  
While Bakel cursed and scampered round,  
In impotent despair:  
Meantime the roof poured torrents down  
On the poor parson's naked crown.

Now Bakel found all efforts vain  
To ope the dunghill's side;  
And though his friend there still had lain,  
No help could he provide.



At last a powerful lever's found ;  
With it he heaves him from the ground.

But ah how adverse still their fate !  
For now they found a court,  
Whose towering walls and barred gate  
Cut further egress short.  
Thus fruitless all these dangers run  
The dreadful cannibals to shun !

Now they prepare their hearts to sing  
A "*valet*" ere they die,  
And only seek a shelt'ring roof,  
Till then to keep them dry.  
Experience tells we best may claim  
Success, if *humble* be our aim.

So found the candidates for death  
A shelter in their need ;  
It was a hovel near a shade  
Where cattle use to feed.  
It chanced that in that hole, his swine  
Our host, while feeding, did confine

But *they* had burst their little door,  
And so had stole away,  
And in the garden with their snouts  
Did hold their merry play ;  
While in their place our pious friends  
Most fervently did pray.

"Oh think, dear Bakel, that the grave  
Is but the gate of life ;  
There beggars equal mighty kings ;  
There ends all mortal strife ;  
The injured slave feels not the thong,  
Nor drags his weary chain along."

"Ah yes, how truly says the bard,  
*Si hora mortis ruit*  
*Is fit Irvs subito*  
*Qui modo Cræsus fuit.*"  
Thus spent they all the hours of night,  
Till dawn the little court did light.

Now hideously a door did creak,  
From which came out the man,  
Whose eye beamed murder ; and he  
straight  
To whet his knife began  
And muttered as he rubbed away,  
"Ye *black ones* ye shall die to-day!"

The host a *Flesher* was by trade,  
And spoke still of his swine,  
While all these dreadful thoughts beset  
The Teacher and Divine ;

Who fell into the odd mistake,  
That he their lives designed to take.

So forth he stretched his hand to draw  
The swine from out their hole : —  
The first thing that he seized upon  
Was Bakel's thickened sole :  
He cried in terrour and affright,  
"The Devil ! oh ye powers of light !"

Now was their foolish blunder clear ;  
They showed themselves in day ;  
And soon the *Flesher's* deadly fears  
And dread were chased away.  
A hearty breakfast crowned the board,  
And laughter loudly as it roared.

At parting all swore solemnly  
The blunder to conceal,  
But lately when I made a feast  
Of venison and veal,  
The parson in a merry mood  
The whole truth did reveal.

From the Ladies Monthly Museum.

## THE MOSS ROSE.

FROM THE GERMAN.

THE angel of the flowers one day,  
Beneath a rose-tree sleeping lay,  
That spirit, to whose charge is given  
To bathe young buds in dew from hea-  
ven.

Awaking from his light repose,  
The angel whispered to the rose—  
"Oh! fondest object of my care,  
Still fairest found where all are fair,  
For the sweet shade thou'st given to  
me,

Ask what thou wilt, 'tis granted thee."  
"Then," said the rose, "with deepen'd  
glow,

On me one beauty more bestow."  
The spirit paus'd, in silent thought—  
What grace was there that flower had  
not ?

'Twas but a moment—o'er the rose  
A veil of moss the angel throws ;  
And rob'd in nature's simplest weed,  
Could there a flower that rose exceed ?

ISABELL